IN THE CLAIMS:

The text of all pending claims, (including withdrawn claims) is set forth below. Cancelled and not entered claims are indicated with claim number and status only. The claims as listed below show added text with <u>underlining</u> and deleted text with ~~strikethrough~~. The status of each claim is indicated with one of (original), (currently amended), (cancelled), (withdrawn), (new), (previously presented), or (not entered).

Please AMEND claims 1, 2 and 4, and please ADD claims 5 and 6 in accordance with the following:

1. (Currently Amended) An apparatus <u>for reading a code given to a commodity</u> comprising:

<u>a medium reading unit which reads individual operator setting information stored in a recording medium, the individual operator setting information including operation-interval information representing a time interval between operations to read the code, reading-time information at operations to read the code, double-read-ban time information at operations to read the code, and frequent-beam information representing a most frequently used beam of a plurality of beams, wherein the operation–interval information, the reading-time information, the double-read-ban time information, and the frequent-beam information depend on personal features of operators engaged in the reading operation;</u>

<u>a setting unit which sets an operation standard on the basis of the individual operator setting information corresponding to a specific operator before an operation;</u>

<u>a controlling unit which operates the apparatus in the state corresponding to said personal features according to the operation-interval information, the reading-time information, the double-read-ban time information, and the frequent-beam information within the operation standard;</u>

a reading unit which reads ~~a~~ <u>the</u> code ~~given to a commodity~~ by using at least one beam of the plurality of beams; and

a frequent beam specifying unit which specifies the most frequently used beam of the plurality of beams owing to the personal features of the operator in the operation for reading the code,

wherein said reading unit reads the code by using the specified beam preferentially.

2. (Currently Amended) The apparatus according to claim 1, further comprising a writing unit which writes the information of the beam specified in a portablethe recording medium corresponding to the operator,; and

        wherein the medium a setting reading unit which reads the information of the beam from said portable recording medium before operation,

        wherein said recording medium is a portable recording medium and said reading unit reads the code by using the beam preferentially on the basis of the information of the read beam.

3. (Original) The apparatus according to claim 2, further comprising an authentication unit which checks authentication of the operator,

        wherein said writing unit performs writing and said reading unit performs reading with the result of authentication by said authenticating unit as a trigger.

4. (Currently Amended) A method of reading a code given to a commodity, comprising the operations of:

        reading individual operator setting information stored in a recording medium, the individual operator setting information including operation-interval information representing a time interval between operations to read the code, reading-time information at operations to read the code, double-read-ban time information at operations to read the code, and frequent-beam information representing a most frequently used beam of a plurality of beams, wherein the operation-interval information, the reading-time information, the double-read-ban time information, and the frequent-beam information depend on personal features of operators engaged in the reading operation;

        setting an operation standard on the basis of the individual operator setting information corresponding to a specific operator before an operation;

        operating the apparatus in the state corresponding to said personal features according to the operation-interval information, the reading-time information, the double-read-ban time information, and the frequent-beam information within the operation standard;

3

reading a-the code given to a commodity by using at least one beam of the plurality of beams; and

specifying the most frequently used beam of the plurality of beams owing to the personal <u>characteristics of the manner of operation by</u> features-of-the operator in the operation for reading the code,

wherein the code is read in the reading step by using the specified beam preferentially.

5. (New) An apparatus for reading a code given to a commodity comprising:

a medium reading unit which reads individual operator setting data stored in a recording medium, the individual operator setting data depending on personal characteristics of the manner of operation by the operator engaged in the reading operation;

a setting unit which before an operation, sets an operation standard on the basis of the individual operator setting data corresponding to a specific operator;

a controlling unit which operates the apparatus in the state corresponding to said personal characteristics according to information within the operation standard;

a reading unit which reads the code by using at least one beam of a plurality of beams; and

a frequent beam specifying unit which specifies the most frequently used beam of the plurality of beams owing to the personal characteristics of the manner of operation by the operator in the operation for reading the code.

6. (New) The apparatus according to claim 5, wherein the personal characteristics of the manner of operation by the operator include rhythm, habitual manner and preference; and wherein said reading unit reads the code by using the specified beam preferentially.